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www.metro.us/gifts

BLACK FRIDAY 2011

- Braving the crowds this weekend?
- We've got expert tips to save you more, inside info on the best deals and gift ideas for everyone on your list

saving tips

Shop smart on Black Friday

Don't enter the Natick Collection hordes as a sleepy Thanksgiving zombie Money-saving expert Andrea Woroch on making the most of deals on Black Friday and beyond

For some people, the idea of waking up at 5 a.m. the day after Thanksgiving to battle mall crowds is about as appealing as Tofurkey. But for others, even in the age of Cyber Monday and free shipping, it's all about the hunt.

"Every year we see an increase of people turning to online shopping, but with Black Friday you still get lots of crowds," says Andrea Woroch, a consumer and money-saving expert for Kinoli Inc. "There are people who like to find those door-busting deals, and sure enough, there are still great deals to be had out there."

That said, even Black Friday die-hards can learn a little from their tech-savvy counterparts. Here are Woroch's top tips for shopping smart in the midst of retail madness.

Have a plan

"One of the most important things you can do is plan ahead and find out what the deals are going to be across several different stores," says Woroch. "Let's say there's a huge discount on a TV at Target — call ahead and ask how many they have in stock. Map out a route, or go to a mall where there are a variety of stores."

Hit the road early

You'll want to set the alarm for a disturbing hour not just for the deals, but to ensure a leisurely day. "It pays to be out there early because the door-busters will be limited in quantity. The earlier you shop, the more time you have to hit retailers and feel like you can get lunch. That's important — you should also enjoy the crazy holiday shopping frenzy."

Take advantage of price-matching

"Remember that big merchants like Sears, Home Depot and Wal-Mart are really beefing up their price-matching guarantees. They'll meet or beat a competitor's price. Have your smartphone with you to download and present barcodes that cashiers can price-match while you're at the store."

GOODSHOOT

▶ In a new survey by Consumersearch.com, 61 percent of respondents said they plan to shop in stores on Black Friday.

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LEARN HOW TO MAKE THE BEST MALL SURVIVAL KIT

Load up on apps

There are a ton of apps out there to help you shop savvy. Woroch recommends Amazon's free Price Check app — which allows you to scan barcodes and compare them to in-store prices — and Sale Saver, a supercalculator that computes the actual price of an item after that additional 20 percent off, sales tax and coupons. But the gold standard is Coupon Sherpa, which synchs with your GPS to find paperless coupons, which cashiers can scan right off your phone.

Only buy what you need

"Retailers are already out there offering deals," says Woroch. "They want to create a sense of urgency — but they'll offer that 40 percent off again. Do your research, know how much things cost and take advantage of a deal only when you need it."

Pro tip

If you know what stores you'll be shopping at in advance, visit **Giftcardgranny.com**, where you can buy gift cards at less than face value from sellers who would rather have the cash. "You can save anywhere from an additional 5 percent to 35 percent," says Woroch.

MONICA WEYMOUTH
monica.weymouth@metro.us

Line up!

Mall opening times

▶ **Wrentham Village Premium Outlets**
One Premium Outlet Blvd., Wrentham
Opening at midnight

▶ **CambridgeSide Galleria**
100 CambridgeSide Place, Cambridge
Opening at 12:30 a.m.

▶ **South Shore Plaza**
250 Granite St., Braintree
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Northshore Mall**
210 Andover St., Peabody
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Arsenal Mall**
485 Arsenal St., Watertown
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Burlington Mall**
75 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Liberty Tree Mall**
100 Independence Way, Danvers
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Emerald Square Mall**
999 South Washington St., North Attleboro
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **Solomon Pond Mall**
601 Donald Lynch Blvd., Marlborough
Opening at 4 a.m.

▶ **The Natick Collection**
1245 Worcester St., Natick
Opening at 6 a.m.

▶ **Copley Place**
100 Huntington Ave., Boston
Opening at 9 a.m.

▶ **The Shops at Prudential Center**
800 Boylston St., Boston
Opening at 9 a.m

▶ **The Mall at Chestnut Hill**
199 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill
Opening at 9 a.m.

▶ **Atrium Mall**
300 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill
Opening at 9 a.m.

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Winter Outdoor Accessories

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local deals

A colorful shopping weekend

Boston celebrates Black Friday and Plaid Saturday with many local and online ways to spend your greens

What with Black Friday, Plaid Saturday and Cyber Monday, the "biggest shopping day of the year" is morphing into a long shopping weekend. (Don't worry Sunday — your, um, day will come.)

Local online deals

Why wait until you're back at work on Monday to do your holiday shopping online? Black Friday is also becoming Green Friday as consumers choose to shop from home.

Boston's home goods superstore, **Jossandmain.com**, has special Black Friday discounts of up to 70 percent and a fun Finders Keepers promotion featuring 25 items (from a Missoni pouf to a hush-hush "top designer" chair) hidden throughout the site for shoppers to claim for free (**www.jossandmain.com**).

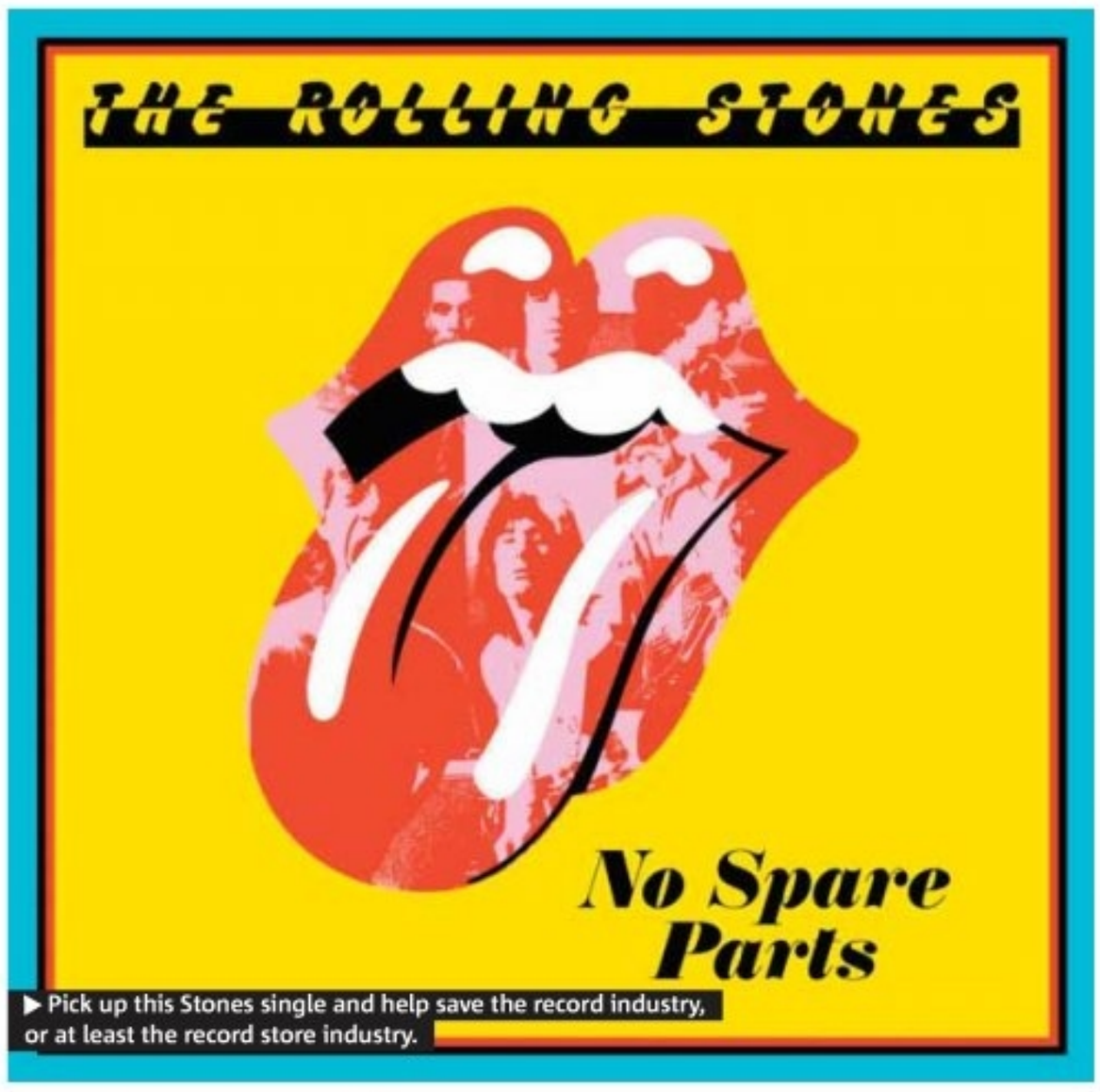
At **Wayfair.com**, another Boston online giant, Metro readers get an exclusive 10 percent off coupon, good for 24 hours on Black Friday. Just enter the code WAYFAIR10. Also, there's savings from 15 to 60 percent off everything from toys and tools to furniture and footwear, too (**www.wayfair.com**).

Shop online or in real-time at your local record store for **Record Store Day**'s Black Friday promotions. There's lots of limited edition vinyl, including the album that changed the Red Hot Chili Peppers into hitmakers giants, "Blood Sugar Sex Magik," reissued on its 20 anniversary. Get the jump on The Black Keys new "El Camino" (out Dec. 6) with the "Lonely Boy" EP. For classic rockers, the Rolling Stones issue a previously unreleased track, "No Spare Parts," on 7-inch vinyl (**www.recordstoreday.com**).

Bad in plaid

Head to **Harvard Square**, which celebrates Plaid Saturday — the oddly-named indie business answer to Black Friday — for deals at cute stores like **Berks** shoes. Buy any item at regular price, get 25 percent off the second (50 JFK St. 617-492-9511. **www.berkshoes.com**). At **Follow the Honey**, along with 10 percent off pre-orders on Christmas and Hanukkah baskets, Vermont native Melissa Brodeur introduces her Bee Well herb and honey body scrubs and skin oils and will be onsite to give chair massages (1132 Mass. Ave. 617-945-7356. **www.followthehoney.com**)

You could get this Missoni pouf for free if you figure out the secret spots of Joss and Main.com.



Pick up this Stones single and help save the record industry, or at least the record store industry.

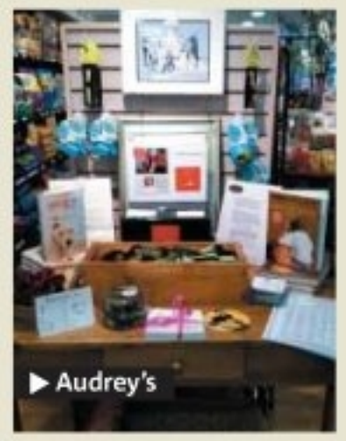
Midnight madness

For those Midnight Madness addicts, **Wrentham Village Premium Outlets'** annual early opening — yup, midnight — brings added specials for night-owl shoppers and more throughout the daylight hours too. The outlet village adds cool new stores this season, including **Ted Baker**, **Bloomingdale's**, and **Tory Burch**. (One Premium Outlets Blvd., Wrentham. 508-384-0600. **www.premiumoutlets.com/wrentham**).

This Ted Baker bag can be yours for a bargain as soon as 12:01 a.m. at the Wrentham outlets.

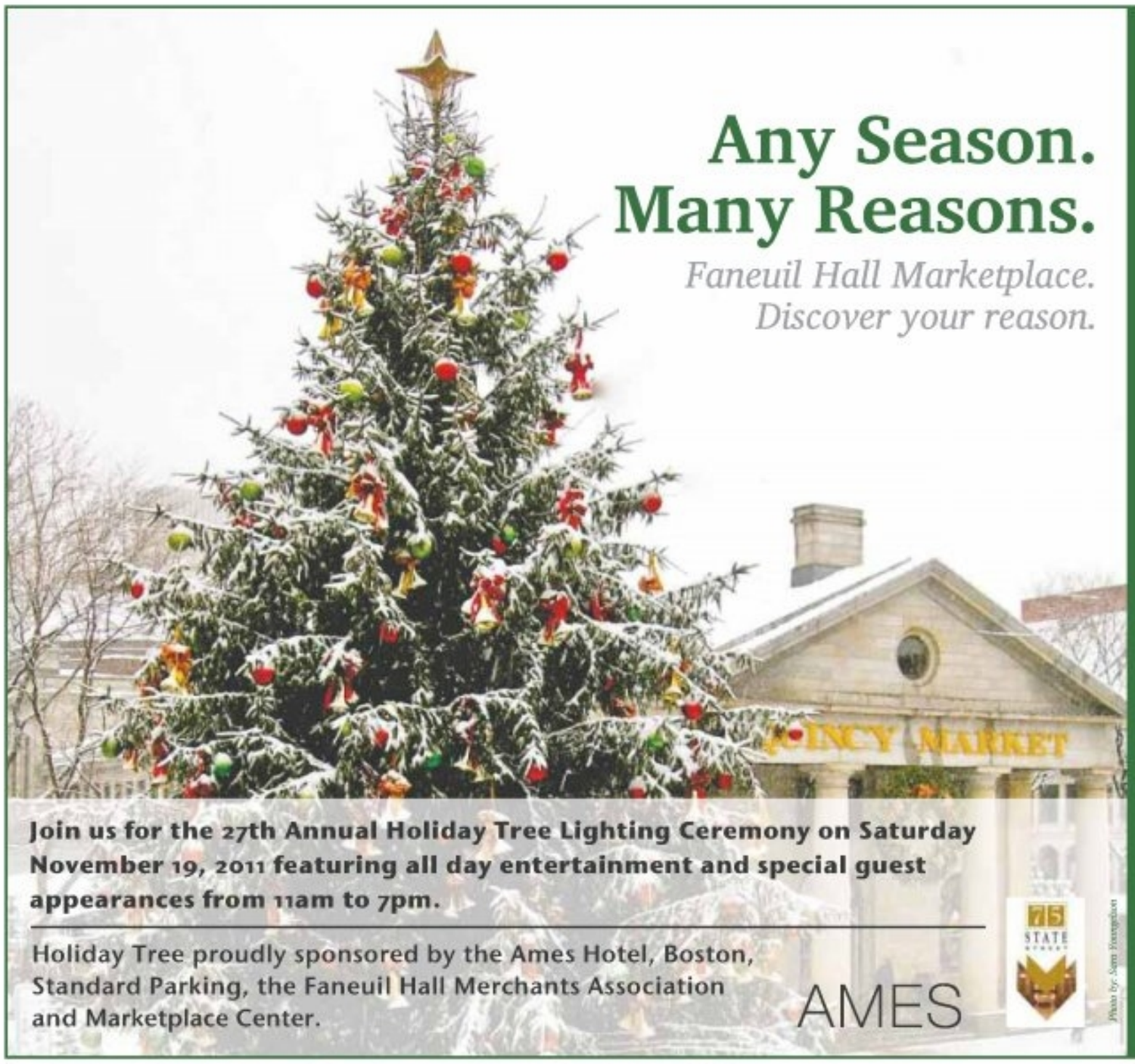
Walking around

Hoofing the Back Bay on Black Friday means deals at lots of indie stores and giant chains. Start your Black Friday savings at **Audrey's Pet Supply**, where the first 20 customers who spend more than $50, get a 15 oz. bag of Dogswell's (excellent) all-natural beef jerky (296 Newbury St. 857-991-1236. **www.audreysbostoncom**). End with much-needed sustenance from the **Mandarin's M Bar**, which has a Black Friday bonus: Buy a signature cocktail and a Lite Bites menu item and get an additional Lite Bites dish on the house; 776 Boylston St. 617-535-8800. **www.mandarinoriental.com/boston**). In between, hit **H&M** for big discounts and scratch cards of up to $300 for the first 100 customers (100 Newbury St. 617-859-3192. **www.hm.com**).



Audrey's

LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us



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gift guide

Who's been naughty, and who's nice?

Every year, Consumer Reports magazine looks at the shopping policies of major companies and does Santa's work for him How a few brands measured up

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Best Buy previously landed on the "naughty" list for return policies. Will a "Harry Potter" screening for early customers make them "nice" this year? Check www.consumerreports.org.

NAUGHTY

AirTran: Discounted coach and on-sale tickets don't include the price of a seat, which costs an extra $6-$20 each way at the time of booking.

RadioShack: The company sometimes charges different prices for items depending on whether it was bought online or at the store, including one instance where the cost of an HDMI cable in-store was nearly twice the cost of the online price.

American Apparel: Offers two return policies with no explanation — online customers get full refunds while store shoppers only receive merchandise credit.

NICE

American Express: Can refund the full purchase price of covered items up to $300 when cardholders are unsuccessful in returning them to a merchant within 90 days.

REI: Accepts returns or exchanges at any time for any reason in-person or by mail, whether you bought it online, in the store or at an REI Outlet.

Live Nation: Gives fans 72 hours to cancel their ticket order and get a refund at many venues up to one week before the event.

CONTRIBUTED BY CONSUMER REPORTS

Gifts for kids

A little something for the little ones

Is it just us, or have toys gotten way cooler since we believed in Santa? Our picks for kids — and one or two for kids at heart

MONICA WEYMOUTH
monica.weymouth@metro.us

1

2

3

4

5

6

1. Hello, Kitty! This MP3 player can store more than 100 songs and keep sticky fingers off your iPhone. **$30, www.toysrus.com**

2. We have no idea when the EasyBake oven got this cool. Or started including red velvet cupcakes. But we do know we still want one — bad. **$50, www.hasbrotoyshop.com**

3. Meet Magical Fairy Dora: From what we understand about little girls, you cannot possibly go wrong with this one. **$30, www.shop.nick.com**

4. LEGO characters have come a long way since we last played with the little blockheads. This year, SpongeBob SquarePants and friends get in on the action. **$15-$20, www.shop.nick.com**

WWW.METRO.US/GIFTS
VISIT US ONLINE FOR MORE IDEAS FOR KIDS

5. The "Sesame Street" gang are never going out of style. Let's Rock Elmo sings and plays instruments (don't worry — he's happy to share his drums with kiddos), while Count 'N Crunch Cookie Monster teaches numbers as he gobbles away. **Cookie: $30; Elmo: $70, www.hasbrotoyshop.com**

6. Keep their first Christmas nice and cozy with MyNatural Disney Blankies, made from natural cotton and colored with eco-friendly dyes. **$15, www.toysrus.com**

new balance

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NOV 25 FRI • 10AM-CLOSE
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WARRIOR BRINE OUTLET STORE

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wrapping

Metro pick

Old-school holiday cards

Pardon us for the shameless plug, but when not making our pages look pretty, Metro designer Stephanie Hinderer creates some seriously cute greeting cards over at Red Letter Paper Company. This Christmas, embrace snail mail with the "not sent from my iPhone" series, complete with a pixilated evergreen.

$16 (set of five), www.etsy.com/shop/redletterpaperco

MONICA WEYMOUTH

5 Holiday gift-wrapping tips from DailyCandy

Score big on Black Friday? You're not quite done just yet DailyCandy correspondent SuChin Pak shows us how to wrap those gifts up right

1 Make a statement with ribbon and twine
Consider ribbon and twine your presents' key accessory — let it do the talking.

- **Kate's Paperie Satin Ribbon, $.73-$2.80 per yard,** www.katespaperie.com
- **Knot & Bow Glitter Twine, $20,** www.etsy.com/shop/knotandbow

2 Get crafty with wrapping paper
Use brown craft paper or a combination of stamps and old calendars to bring a hint of nostalgia to your holiday presents.

1

3 Personalized gift tags
Use on-trend gift tags to make your present feel current and fashion forward.

- **Seahorse Gift Tags, $3, www.etsy.com/shop/decadentdesigns**

3

4 Seal it
Decorative tape adds a bit of flair to any package.

- **Tape Swell tapes, $7, www.tapeswell.com**

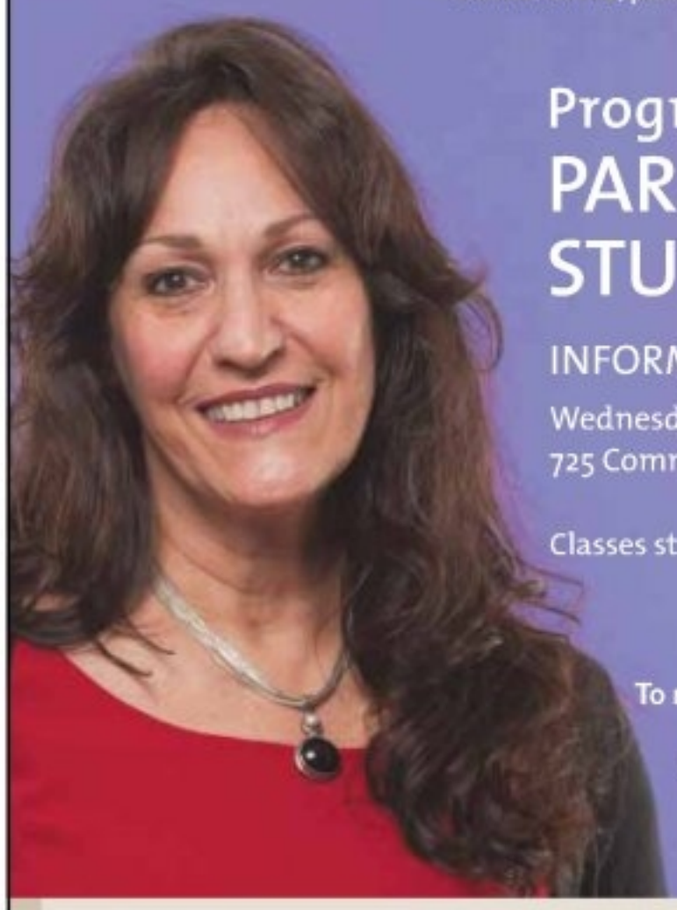
4

5 Add a card
Don't forget to add a card and give your best wishes for the New Year.

CONTRIBUTED BY DAILY CANDY

My overall experience was very positive. Weekend classes were convenient, and faculty members were well-prepared and passionate about the areas of law they dealt with. They even helped me create a new résumé, enabling me to obtain a job within a week of graduation."

— JOANNE GRACE, paralegal; BU certificate awarded 2010



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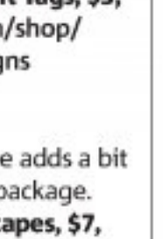
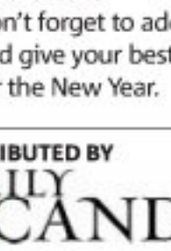

Dan Hu, MD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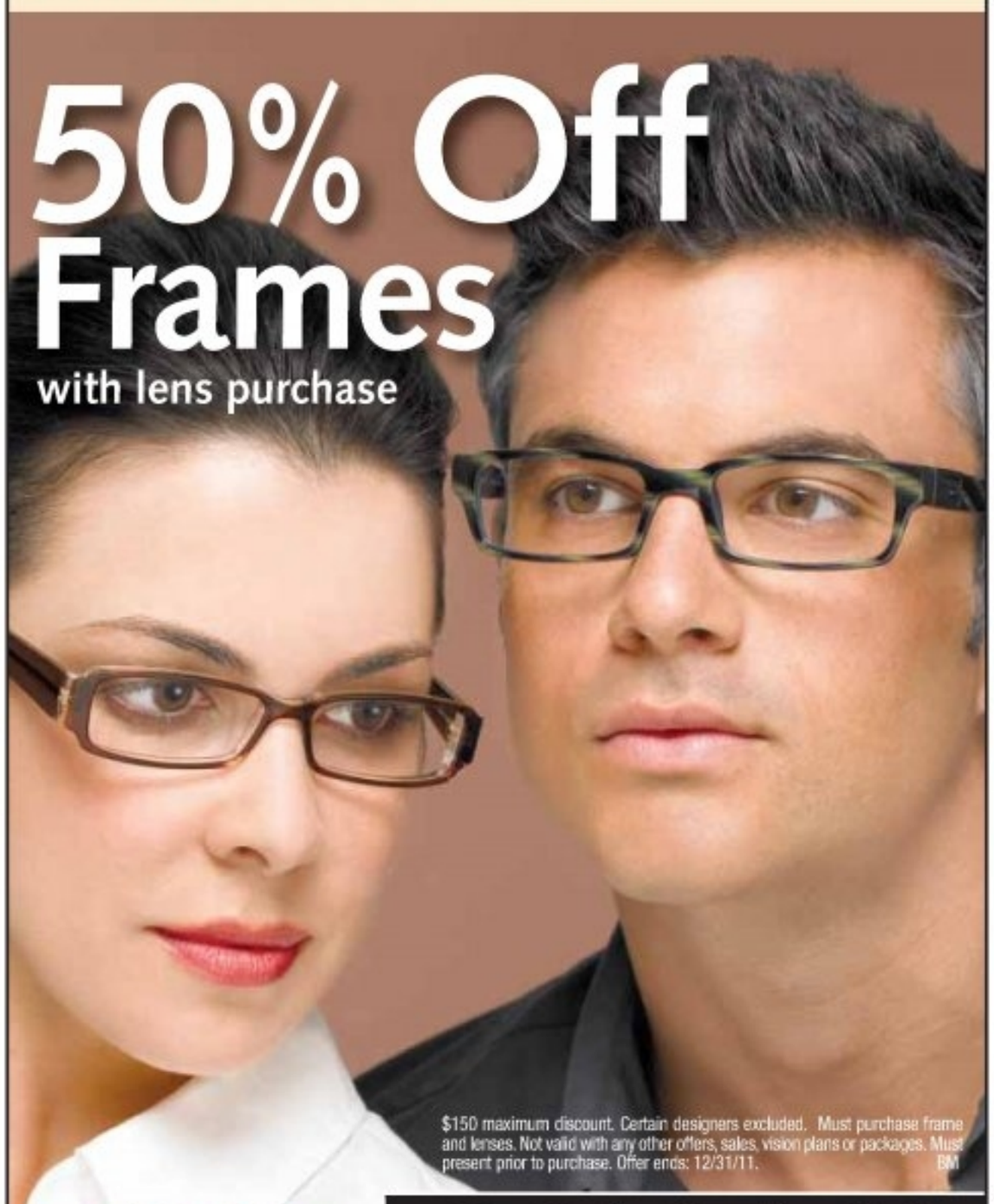

$150 maximum discount. Certain designers excluded. Must purchase frame and lenses. Not valid with any other offers, sales, vision plans or packages. Must present prior to purchase. Offer ends: 12/31/11. BM

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sales

Don't forget the home

A frog for a good cause

With every purchase of a soft toy at IKEA through Dec. 24, the retailer will donate approximately $1.47 ($1 Euro) to UNICEF and Save the Children's educational programs. IKEA's adorable plushies (we love the Fabler Groda fairy frog) range from $1.49 up to $19.99 — but this weekend only, these soft toys will be on sale for 50 percent off.

Our favorite affordable Swedish design store, IKEA, is offering deals — and goodwill — all weekend long

Daily deals

Friday: Score the best-selling children's Mala Easel for $9.99 (regular price: $14.99). Don't forget the Mala Chalk ($1.99) to spark your little artists' imagination.

Saturday: The 365+ seven-piece stainless steel cookware set includes the essential pots and pans (and lids!) needed to whip up any holiday meal for just $19.99 (regular price: $39.99). Pair with the Direkt three-piece kitchen utensil ($3.99) for your own Iron Chef's kitchen.

Sunday: The Expedit shelving unit — the perfect little cubby — gets a perfect little price tag: $19.99 (regular price: $39.99). Store important documents — like Christmas wish lists — in the Kassett Magazine Boxes ($9.99 for a two-pack), which fit perfectly into the Expedit shelves.

AMBER RAY

Black Friday playlist

Shop with your buds — your earbuds

Holiday carols through the speakers at the mall? Bah humbug! On Friday, make your own soundtrack and rock out with this playlist.

'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,' Culture
There's nothing wrong with getting into the spirit of the season, but do it on your own terms. Sometimes, your own terms might mean this chill reggae version of a classic, so you don't feel like it's something you've already heard a million times.

'Oh No,' Girl Talk
This mashup has the colossal layering of personalities that the shopping experience offers. Plus it combines Black Sabbath power chords with Ludacris, saying "Move b—, get out-the way."

'Pretty Boy Swag,' Soulja Boy Tell'em
Speaking of "get out-the way," you might want to make this one your anthem too, and say "pretty boy comin' through."

'Bittersweet Symphony,' The Verve
Ever see the video for this one? Singer Richard Ashcroft is just walking through the crowded street, banging into everybody else, totally oblivious that they're there because his song is so awesome. This tune will make you be that guy as you steamroll through the mall.

'Albatross,' Fleetwood Mac
You'll definitely need a few zen moments with your headphones as you brave this aggressive shopping climate. This wordless tune by an early incarnation of Fleetwood Mac is a great start. If this instrumental gives you that crucial inner peace, also try R.E.M.'s "New Orleans Instrumental," and Yo La Tengo's "Return to Hot Chicken."

PAT HEALY

take it from a turkey, it's not healthy to be plump.

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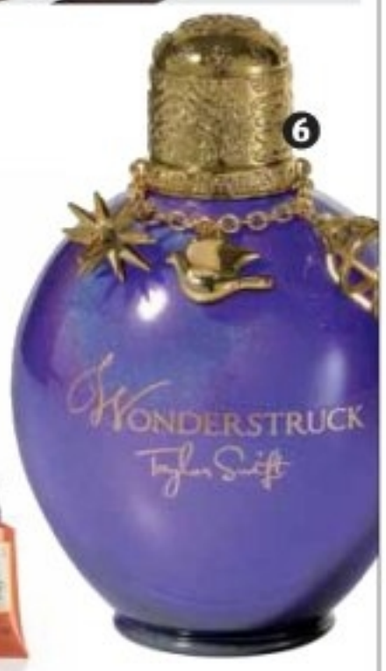
gift guide

Gifts for her

Make her wish list come true

- Things she needs are great
- But things she wants are even better

MONICA WEYMOUTH
monica.weymouth@metro.us



1. The concept for the "6 Packs/9 Lives" calendar is pretty simple: Hot guys and cute cats make every month that much better. Proceeds from the calendar benefit the Found Animals Foundation, an L.A.-based nonprofit that works to decrease animal shelter euthanasia. Without further ado, please meet Mr. December. **$14, www.foundanimals.org**

2. LUSH's "Brrrrilliant" box includes grapefruit-kissed Snow Globe soap and Australian Igloo sugar scrub to instantly warm up the chilly mornings ahead. **$13, www.lush.com**

3. People have very personal, very strong, very loud views about Ugg boots. But the brand's classic duffle — made of rugged waxed canvas and finished off with rustic brass hardware — is a definite crowd-pleaser. **$345, www.uggaustralia.com**

4. We love these Diane von Furstenberg "Zoe" shades for snowy mornings and sunny shores alike. **$165, available soon at www.dvf.com**

5. Give her something to look forward to with Crabtree & Evelyn's "shed bag," which comes with veggie-printed gardening tools and pampering potions for the greenest of thumbs. **$48, www.crabtree-evelyn.com**

6. There's no shortage of starlets hawking fragrances this season. Not all of them are girls you want to smell like. We like the subtle fruity scent of Taylor Swift's Wonderstruck almost as much as its bottle. **$60 (3.4 oz.), at Macy's stores**

Read more on page 24

Psyched for the Season?
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gift guide

6. Big bulky terrycloth robes are for your mom. Betsey Johnson's adorable little velour and satin robe definitely isn't. $89, at Bloomingdale's stores and www.betseyjohnson.com

Continued from page 23

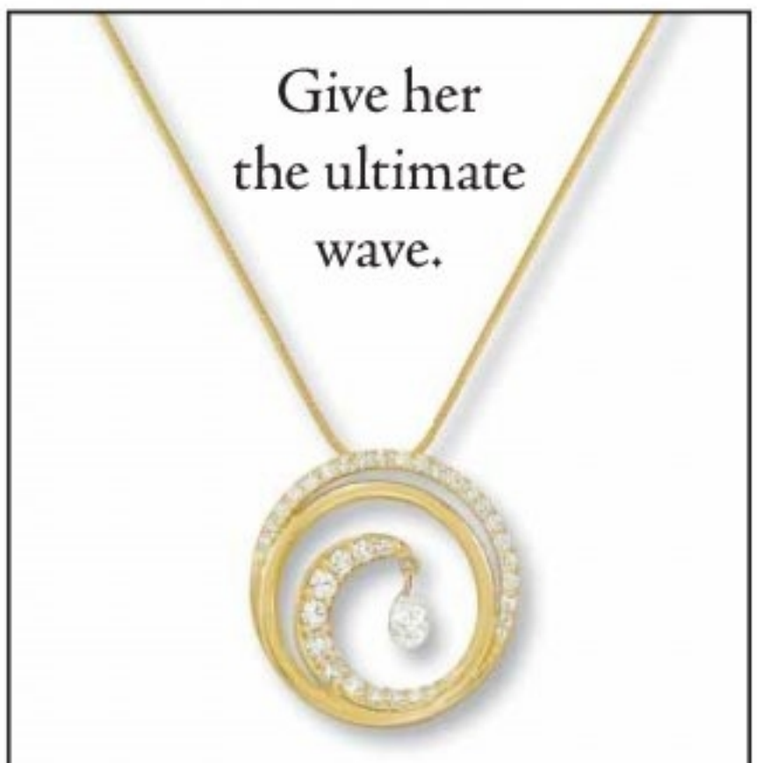
1. These Converse high-tops are still classics, but a little extra special — just like her. **$100, www.converse.com**

2. At less than $30, Rubr watches make a trendy stocking stuffer for almost anyone. **$25, www.rubrwatchnation.com**

3. Soap & Glory's cheeky "Do a Bubble Take" gift set has all the makings for a perfectly decadent bubble bath. Minus — hint, hint — a bottle of bubbly. **$36, www.sephora.com**

4. Even if she doesn't usually wear perfume, Viva La Juicy's flirty little bottle has an irresistible Paris-after-hours appeal. **$98 (3.4 oz.), at Macy's stores**

5. Keep your snowbunny warm with Restoration Hardware's so-soft faux-fur booties and ushanka hat. **$19 (booties), $39 (hat), www.restorationhardware.com**



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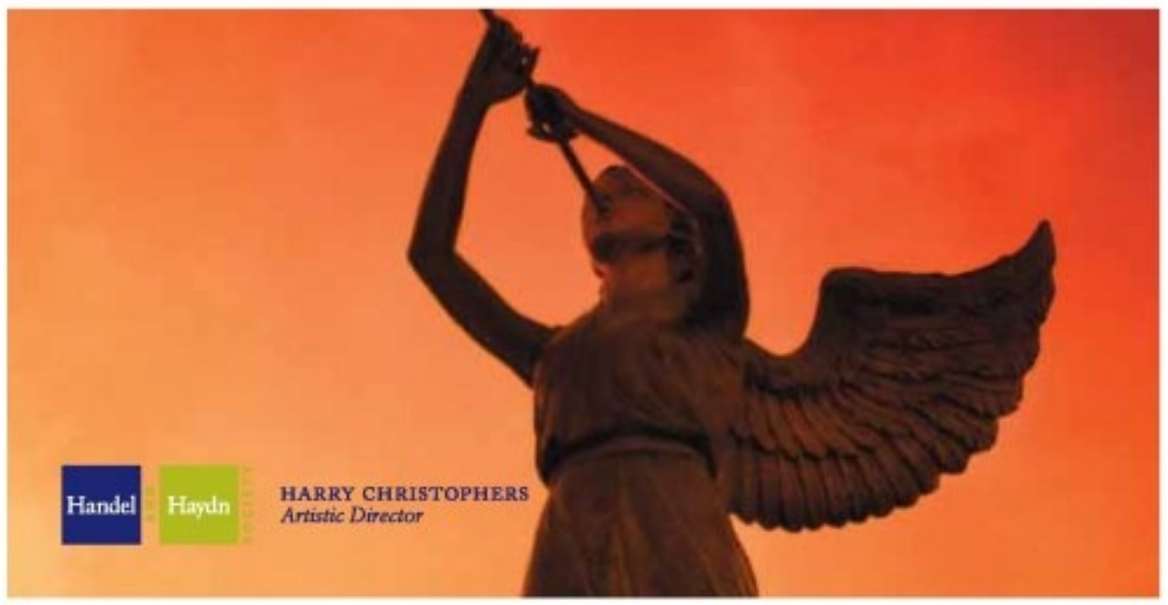

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gift guide

Gifts for him

Gadgets and gear, whisky and beer

From your nerdy dad to your frat-boy bro to your stylish New Year's Eve escort, we have you covered

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1. Ralph Lauren's knit vest is the rare vest that doesn't look ridiculous outside of a hot cocoa commercial. **$145, www.ralphlauren.com**

2. The Onions' Beer Lover Gift Pack includes an "I Enjoy Drinking Beer" tee, two pint glasses with measures for liquids from barium to soda, a framed front-page beer story and, of course, the reason you'd buy someone this: A magnet featuring the headline "Study: Alligators Dangerous No Matter How Drunk You Are." It's true. **$82, www.store.theonion.com**

3. With their stylish plaid wrappers, Sir Richard's condoms are the only prophylactics we'd recommend as stocking stuffers. Plus, for every condom bought, Sir Richard — ever the gentleman — donates one to a developing country. **$13-$14, at Whole Foods stores**

4. Seltzer's "Seven Year" pens can write up to two meters a day for seven years thanks to a barrel that holds about six times the amount of ink as your average pen. We particularly like this dapper fellow. **$7.50, www.seltzergoods.com**

6. Designed for cyclists, Levi's Commuter jeans have a utility waistband for easy U-lock storage, reflective tape on the cuffs and just enough stretch for comfy pedaling. **$78, at Urban Outfitters stores**

7. For every pair of their hand-painted One for One series, TOMS will donate to provide prescription glasses or sight-saving treatment to a person in need. **$135, www.toms.com**

8. Everyone expects a chunky cable-knit under the tree, but Orlebar Brown's lightweight, cotton-silk scarf is more suited for a cool night on the beach. **$79, www.orlebarbrown.com**

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